REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the previous amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-17 are cancelled. New Claims 18-30 are pending. Support to the new claims appears in the attached substitute specification at, for example, the paragraph bridging pages 2-3, the last full paragraph on page 3, the first paragraph in the "Detailed Description", and the originally filed claims.

The attached substitute specification addresses the issues raised in paragraph one of the Official Action. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is therefore respectfully requested.

Regarding the drawing objections, Applicants respectfully submit that a machining station and a compact are illustrated in Fig. 1 of the drawings. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 are cancelled. The objections and rejections applied to those claims are therefore moot.

The present application is directed to embodiments of a process for producing dental prostheses. Referring to the attached substitute specification, the paragraph bridging pages 2 and 3 discusses exemplary embodiments which utilize blanks having a relative large diameter of greater than 50 mm. This relatively large diameter enables a number of prosthetic units to be worked from the blank, as discussed in lines 3-4 of page 6 and as illustrated in Fig. 2.

New Claim 18, the only pending independent claim, recites a blank for producing dental prostheses, wherein the blank is made from ceramic material being in unsintered form or being not finally sintered and wherein the blank is configured as

a round or quasi-round disk with a diameter greater than 50 mm. New Claim 18 is allowable over the previously applied Filser and Panzera references for the following reasons.

In addressing the size of the blank, the Examiner correctly notes that neither of the Filser or Panzera references disclose a blank having a diameter greater than 50 mm. The Examiner goes on to state that "the actual size of the blank does not provide for a specific limitation in the process, but instead provides for a size of the blank to be used based on the size of the dental prostheses being machined." Applicants respectfully disagree with this notion.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the size of the blank does in fact provide a specific feature in the process. Specifically, the recitation of a diameter greater than 50 mm in claim 18 allows the plural "dental prostheses" of claim 1 to be produced from the unitary blank. Neither Filser nor Panzera discloses or suggests producing plural "dental prostheses" from a unitary "blank". Thus, an ordinarily skilled artisan would not have found it obvious to have modified diameter of a blank in either of the Filser or Panzera patent to have a diameter greater than 50 mm.

The dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent Claim 1. The dependent claims recite further distinguishing aspects of the Applicants' claimed blank and the process as presently claimed. For example, new Claim 26 recites a process for producing a blank according to claim 18, wherein a cylindrical or quasi-cylindrical compact is formed by fully isostatic or quasi-isostatic pressing of ceramic material and wherein a plurality of disk-shaped blanks of varied thickness are separated at a right angle to an axis of the compact.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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